681 among the Khevsur, the loss of an arm or leg was valued at twenty-four cows, that of a finger, from five cows for the thumb down to one cow for the little finger. Face wounds were measured with grains of wheat, and the fine calculated accordingly. Theft (usually involving horses or cattle) inside one's own community was punished by the obligation to repay the value of the stolen property several times over, or to pay an indemnity to the ruling prince. Stealing from other groups was regarded as an accomplishment rather than a crime, and a young man who had never managed to steal a horse would not easily find a wife.

695 Justice was administered by community courts in which the oldest sat in judgment, or by specially elected mediators (Georg. shuak'atsi) who had the confidence of both plaintiff and defendant, and whose decision was always accepted as final. Witnesses were called and oaths were taken upon sacred objects (in the N. W. Caucasus, often a blacksmith's anvil, later replaced by the Koran), or in the name of ancestors, sanctuaries, etc. In difficult cases, various types of ordeals were resorted to.

577 As characteristic traits of a more general nature in Caucasian life, hospitality, respect for superior age, and--especially among the mountaineers--susceptibility to offence and vengefulness must be mentioned.

• 577 The mountaineer's touchiness and vengefulness are connected with the stress laid on personal dignity and group-loyalty in Caucasian culture; they go back to the times of blood feuds, intertribal wars and the constant danger of armed attack. Formerly, in the mountaineers' conception of life, wars and predatory raids formed a more honorable way of existence than agriculture and cattle breeding. Only a life of danger and audacity could win a man public esteem, and during the Caucasian war a family that had not lost one or more members in the field was looked down upon with contempt. The inducement to wars and raids was furnished as much by the action itself as by the possible gains. The Circassian who had risked his life in a raid to seize a herd of horses was ready to part with his booty at the first request or even hint of a person who was in need; the "Circassian tradition" required compliance with any request for material help. Material possessions were not placed high in the scale of values; more important was public esteem, and loss of face was feared above all else. The mountaineer is proud, both of his people and their traditions, and in a personal way. He is easily offended, and in the old days offense easily led to bloodshed (a fistfight was considered a disgrace, so that violence was always committed with arms); and an unrevenged killing was the worst shame that could rest on a house.

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7: Columbia U. S-4, 5 1956 RHl Caucasia RHl

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628 The vendetta flourished until well into the Soviet period, as is witnessed by official pamphlets of the twenties combating it.

8: Lužbetak E-4 (no date) 1951 RHl Caucasia RHl

and to be alert. The boys are encouraged to develop into great warriors and robbers. If the boy's father or one of his brothers was killed by an enemy, the boy is constantly admonished of his sacred duty of blood-vengeance.[90]

Yes, boys are taught to become great robbers and raiders. Robbery and raiding are looked upon by the North Caucasians not only as a licit occupation (as long as the victim is a stranger), but a very honourable one. Robbery is a virtue, a national virtue, and forms one of the most important subjects of the curriculum of the Caucasian school-boy.[91] Robbers of Ossetia even have a patron-saint, St. George himself (*Sau-baredzi Dzuar*, i. e., "The Saint of the Black Horseman"), whose favour must be implored, for success or failure in a raid depends entirely on him. Crime is glorified.[92] Baddeley gives us an example of how a victim once forgave a thief out of mere admiration for the skill with which the theft was committed.[93] To rob without being caught is the greatest glory of the Cherkess.[94] Among the Abadzekhs the best robber is always chosen as leader.[95] It was only in recent times that the People's Court in the district of Adighé began to condemn natives for a crime which till then had been considered a virtue—to steal from another village.[96] The Chechen children are actually drilled in stealing. When a Chechen boy is allowed to bear arms for the first time, his father pronounces the solemn words, "May they serve you on the right and wrong paths, in theft and war."[97] The ambition of the young Georgian mountaineer is none other than to become a famous robber.[98] In short, everywhere in the mountains, the boy must be taught and trained to become great, and greatness consists in raids, robbery, theft, and vengeance.[99] Of course, there is a great difference between the Caucasian robbers of today and those of half a century ago. The Cherkess, for example, are no longer so notorious as they were several decades ago. Today they are generally peaceful agriculturalists and cattle breeders.[100]

Girls are brought up by the mother, from whom they learn to cook, make clothes, embroider, work out in the field, etc.[101]

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[90] Klaproth, *Beschreibung der russischen Provinzen zwischen dem Kaspischen und Schwarzen Meer*, p. 120. What Klaproth says of the Lesghians held good for all mountaineers.

[91] Potocki, *op. cit.*, p. 153: "... dans tout le Caucase le brigandage était en honneur." See also: Ellis, *Memoir of a Map, etc.*, p. 20; Essad-Bey, *op. cit.*, p. 194; Dubrovin, *Istorija, I*, i, p. 442, ii, p. 364.

[92] Baddeley, *op. cit.*, I, p. 24.

[93] Baddeley, *op. cit.*, II, p. 114.

[94] Dubois de Montpéreux, *Voyage autour du Caucase*, I, p. 131.

[95] Pallas, *Bemerkungen auf einer Reise in d. süd. Statth. d. russ. Reiches, etc.*, I, p. 369.

[96] Ladyženskij, FT, p. 194.

[97] Essad-Bey, *op. cit.*, p. 183.

[98] Essad-Bey, *op. cit.*, p. 251.

[99] This reminds us of what Caesar had to say of the Germans, *De Bello Gallico*, vi, 23: "They do not regard it as infamous to rob others, provided that the robbery is committed outside their own land, but they actually encourage their youth to such acts, both to give them practice and to keep them busy."

[100] Ladyženskij, FT, p. 200.

[101] Ellis, *op. cit.*, p. 24.